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ABSTRACT

This unit examines why the numbers of Mexican immigrants in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are increasing. In addition, the unit seeks to use cultural information gathered from the Fulbright experience to enrich ESL U.S. history classes with units on Mexico. As students learn about U.S. history, they also gain a basis for comparing the governments of the countries. A 15-item bibliography of recent publications supports the unit. Classroom suggestions for use of the materials are included. (EH)

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The Fulbright Experience in Mexico 1996: An ESL Application. Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar Abroad 1996 (Mexico).

by Susan Rudoff

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

The Fulbright Experience in Mexico 1996: An ESL Application

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The Fulbright Experience in Mexico 1996: An ESL Application

OUTLINE

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The Fulbright Experience in Mexico 1996: An ESL Application

Introduction

My goals in studying Mexico's regions, history, and social/political trends were twofold. First, I wanted to learn what factors are contributing to the marked increase in the number of Mexican immigrants my colleagues and I are encountering in our classes of English as a Second Language (ESL), and what sort of educational system they are coming from. Second, I wanted to apply cultural information I gathered to my class of ESL American History, enriching segments of the course which deal with Mexico as well as providing my Mexican students with a basis for comparison of governments. In addition to sections addressing these two basic goals, my project also includes a bibliography of timely publications I obtained or learned about during the trip, intended not only as supporting documentation, but also as an ongoing resource for myself, my colleagues, and my students.

I. Mexican Immigration and Education

(Sources are cited by their number in my Bibliography. Uncited statistics came from speakers in the Fulbright Mexico Summer Seminar.).

A. Why are Mexicans coming here, and how is immigration changing?

The United States gets more immigrants than any other country, and immigration is now the source of one-third of our population growth. (4) When immigration rose from 4.8% to 8.7% of the U.S. population between 1970 and 1994, almost half of it came from Mexico and Latin America. (13) Mexican states which export the most immigrants are Michoacán, Jalisco, Oaxaca, and Zacatecas. People there say that there are more Michoacanos in the U.S. than in Michoacán! (See map, Appendix A.)

In a country of 95 million people, with 47 million at poverty level, it's clear that economic opportunity sends most Mexican immigrants north. More than half of Mexican families live on less than a thousand pesos ($135) a month, and Mexico's per capita income is $4000 (compared with $25,800 in the U.S.). (8.7)

As a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which went into effect January 1, 1994, initial enthusiasm has turned into one million lost jobs. (7) Ninety percent of all Mexican businesses are small ("small" means 3-10 people in a Mexican family business, whereas 50 employees are considered a small business here), and many of these had to close because they couldn't compete with U.S. businesses not required to pay tariffs in Mexico. There was a flood of imported products and the Mexican public went into a buying frenzy, demanding the new higher standards of quality. At the same time, Indians and Zapatistas staged a well-publicized rebellion in Chiapas and the governing party's presidential candidate was assasinated. Investors lost confidence in Mexico, the devaluation of the peso followed, and the economic crisis of December 19, 1994, was the result. Migration to the U.S. rises each time the peso falls. (7)

In recent years, the maquila industry (U.S.-supplied assembly plants south of the border) has been one way Mexico has attempted to deal with its economic problems, but the jobs it provides offer insufficient wages (equivalent to $5 a day including benefits), requiring a spouse's income, second jobs, and children leaving school for the streets in order to support a family. Industry experts predict that by 2000, 10% of all working Mexicans will be in maquila jobs, but these jobs give no retirement and lay off workers at 40 years of age, so that they must depend on miniscule government pensions for many years after that. Originally employing 90% women, maquiladoras have given more of their jobs to men since this economic crisis. Women have even fewer options for income, and larger numbers of them are migrating across the border. One day of work in the U.S. can earn the equivalent of a week's Mexican wages.

Of course, the maquila industry as well as other economic strategies used in Mexico often do benefit big business there (directly or indirectly), allowing the rich to get richer. Certainly, income distribution illustrates why Mexicans look elsewhere for opportunity: 20% of Mexican families receive 51% of the income. Half of the country's wealth is controlled by two dozen family groups. (8)

Mexico is 26% rural (46% in Michoacan), and non-urban populations there often lack basic services, living in poverty conditions that result in migration. A family's economic resources in these rural communities are measured in terms of how many members are working in the United States; the pattern of breadwinners migrating to the north for employment and sending back earnings is so deeply entrenched in these areas that many communities depend heavily on funds from the migrants even for public works projects. In many towns, half the population is away in the U.S. (only women and children remain in some areas), and village craft trades requiring specific skills passed down for generations are being lost, along with the self-sufficiency they provided.

With over $4 billion a year being sent to Mexico from relatives north of the border, and a growing number of workers involved in the maquila and tourism industries, between one-fifth and one-fourth of the country's population is directly linked financially to the United States. A *Newsweek* essayist recently wrote:

> A nationwide social explosion ... is virtually impossible while such a large ... segment of the population is thriving and as long as a sizeable portion of those outside this realm hope ... to attain its benefits ... With time, the interests of the Mexicans in the U.S.-connected sphere will displace their traditional affection and concern for Mexico. (2)

In other words, while dissatisfied Mexicans have an accepted way to escape economic troubles, the country has little hope of resolving its problems in any revolutionary way. It seems that Mexico's relationship with our country is perpetuating, rather than helping, its crisis.

Jorge Bustamante points out that in Mexico, someone who takes a job in the United States is a family hero, while in this country, the migrant is considered a law-breaker. (15) The Mexican Constitution guarantees its citizens the right to travel wherever they wish and to leave the country at any point, not only at a "port of entry" to the U.S. In this way, that country's Constitution supercedes immigration law; once migrants cross the border, the act becomes this country's problem, because no crime was committed in Mexico.

Since the latest economic crisis in Mexico, general changes in immigration trends shed some light on the differences we are seeing in our ESL classrooms. The education level of Mexican migrants has risen, and a greater proportion of them are coming from cities. More of them are working in urban jobs (like construction) and fewer in agricultural jobs. (15) Also, a growing number of females are coming to the U.S. (Eighty percent of the women who migrate stay here, finding their status and independence improve when they enter this culture. This often leads to divorce. This, in addition to the exodus of working men from rural towns, has resulted in a traumatic breakup of family in some segments of that society.) It looks like Mexicans who did not consider migrating before have now been forced to move north for economic survival.

Often migrants settle here in an area where there are already many people from the same Mexican village, producing a "sister communities" phenomenon with an amazingly regular flow of people and information in both directions. Anthropological research has found that clusters of people come to the same area, work in the same kind of job, network, and learn from each other. We're certainly aware of this trend in school districts with ESL programs!

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Many in Mexico are alarmed at the role migration to the U.S. has played in sapping the country of the best of its population while providing an escape-hatch which masks the need to develop local economic resources. One impediment to such development is the U.S. refusal to buy Mexican exports of tomatoes, avocados, tuna, shrimp, etc. because of competition here. (Though some have pointed out that allowing import of these items would cost us less than the amount we spend on dealing with immigration problems.) Another obstacle to regional development in Mexico is its very centralized government: eighty cents of every dollar in revenue goes to support the central government rather than addressing local needs. If Mexicans are to stay in Mexico, there must be jobs for them at home.

B. What kind of school system do our immigrant students come from?

1. Structure

• Primaria = elementary school, grades 1-6. Students must be 6 years old before the school year starts to enter first grade. If their birthdays are in September or October, they must wait a year. Mexican law says school attendance at this level is compulsory.

•Secundaria = junior high or middle school, a 3-year experience. A very new law has made school attendance at this level mandatory as well. Traditionally, students have had to choose a career at the end of the secundaria, placing them on the appropriate track in high school.

•Preparatoria = high school, a 3-year experience. Graduate receive a "bachilerato" (the general equivalent to our high school diploma). School attendance at this level is not compulsory. Recently, students have been allowed to wait until their final year of this level before selecting a career.

•University = a 5-year program, after which graduates receive either a simple "licenciado" (the general equivalent to our "bachelor of arts"-type undergraduate college degree), or a degree in law or medicine. In other words, high school graduates go directly into law or medical programs without requiring a 4-year undergraduate preparatory experience, as we do here.

2. Curriculum

•Because of its centralized system, the national department of education dictates curriculum and publishes required textbooks.

•Grades 1 and 2 = Spanish and Math.

•Grade 3 = The above, plus Science and local History.

•Grades 4-6 = The above, plus Mexican History.

•English instruction is not a part of the curriculum at the primaria level, but is becoming more common in the secundaria and higher levels, and especially in private adult programs. (Signs advertising private classes can be seen on the street, declaring "English=work"!)

3. Problems

•Mexico's average educational level is 5th grade.

•Compulsory education laws are not enforced. There is no monitoring of which children are not attending school, and there are no truancy officers. Lots of children don't attend school at all. School-aged children often beg on the streets or work to help their families financially. Often children seen begging on the streets aren't hungry or homeless but are part of an extensive, hidden organization of adults which uses and controls the children for profit. It is difficult to convince young people to leave this way of life when school and training are necessary before a real job can be found, and then the minimum wage is so low that more can be made by begging.

•There is tremendous population pressure on existing schools. Mexico's population is still growing at a high rate, and 65% of the population is under age 25. Many public schools run two shifts, from 7:00 to 2:00, and from 4:00 to 9:00. There is a real shortage of secundarias in rural areas, so students must live away from home in another community to attend school there, or "tele-secundarias" are used. These consist of one teacher who runs a VCR, using taped lessons by other teachers in all the different content areas. Many rural parents don't want to send their children to another town to school: last year three girls from Xarácuaro (Michoacán) went to high school in Erongaricuaro, and all three became pregnant.

•Teachers can't ask for much homework, because students often have to work for their families and don't have time.

•Most teachers need a second job to survive financially, so they have no time to work with students outside of class or to provide special services for those who need them. Many teachers are migrating to the U.S. to make a living.

•Teachers are underpaid and poorly trained. Salaries are about 800 pesos every two weeks, and 1600 pesos a month = $225 a month in dollars. At a recent meeting of English teachers, a seminar had to be translated into Spanish because the teachers were inadequately proficient in the language they taught to understand it. School principals have no part in the teacher selection process (they are appointed by teacher unions), nor are they empowered to evaluate or dismiss teachers. Principals' authority is further limited when they have less seniority than teachers they work with.

•Money for school campus maintenance, operation, and supplies is centralized, so requests for desks or restrooms must be justified to a far-removed administration in Mexico City, often with few results. Operating budgets are low, and a major function of principals is acquiring the necessary supplies for the school to operate. Very often this must be accomplished without help from the central administration.

•In many areas, drug use is a major problem, especially with such a large, young population. Also, guns and other weapons are very easy for students to obtain.

4. Solutions

•Politicians cite a growing and disproportionately youthful population as reasons that educational difficulties are not being dealt with. The Mexican constitution guarantees citizens the right to determine the number of children they have, and the Catholic church is often identified as the major obstacle to population control. Now there is an open campaign to limit birth control. Nevertheless, population growth is slowing, and experts say Mexico will achieve a stable population early in the 21st century.

•President Zedillo is doubling resources allotted to education over the next five years, and by 2000, 1% of government spending should go to education.

•Mexicans are starting to participate more in their electoral system, and political parties are encouraging education as the key to a democratic future. Citizens need to be made aware of their basic rights in order to assert them.

II. ESL American History Class

(Students in this class come from 10 - 20 different countries and languages. They usually read English at about a 4th-6th grade level, and have been in the United States for less than 3 years. A significant number of them -- about 25% this year -- are from Mexico. The class is taught chronologically, starting with the first Native cultures throughout the Americas, continuing through the formation of the United States government, wars, westward expansion, and up to the present time. In this election year, we will leave the chronological approach briefly in October to study the candidates, campaigns, issues, and electoral process.)

A. Ancient Mexican Civilizations

The first unit of the school year includes a study of Native Americans throughout North, Central, and South America and the conquests of the Aztec and Maya. Our textbook mentions pyramids and other ruins left by these peoples, but my Fulbright experience has given me more resources to enrich this topic.

OBJECTIVES: (from our textbook, *Exploring American History*, Globe Book Co., 1994)

•To describe what life was like for the earliest settlers of the Americas.
•To describe the Aztec empire and features of the Mayan culture.
•To compare and contrast the Mayan and Aztec cultures.

STRATEGIES:

•Given the opportunity to examine my photos of Paquimé, Teotihuacan, and Palenque, and picture books I brought back with me of archeological sights in Mexico, students will practice language and observation skills by describing physical characteristics of pyramid structures.

- •Students will compare and contrast these structures with ruins and drawings of other Native American structures we've studied in the Americas.
- •Students will read and participate in discussions about Aztec and Mayan religious practices and how they relate to the structures pictured.
- •Students will make observations about the correlation between building materials used and resources which were available to Native Americans.

MATERIALS:

- •My photos of archeological ruins from the Fulbright trip
- •Three large picture books I purchased in Mexico (Bibliography items #1, #5, and #6)

QUESTIONS:

- •What were the largest Native American civilizations in Latin America?
- •How have people today learned about those early cultures?
- •What materials were used to build homes in Northern Mexico and the Southwestern United States? Why?
- •Which native groups built pyramids? What was their purpose?

BACKGROUND NOTES:

- •(Information will be provided by readings in our textbook and the picture books mentioned above, as well as class discussions in which I and any students who have visited these sites describe our impressions of them.)

EVALUATION:

- •In our daily Oral Questions activity, students will respond to the above questions for a grade.
- •As a homework assignment, students will complete a grid requiring sketches of structures left by each major Native American group studied, information about where they lived, their lifestyles, and building materials they used.
- •For extra credit, students will formulate questions about the groups we study, research them further in the school library, and write a short report to present orally to the class.
- •On the Unit Test, students will respond to objective questions (for example, multiple choice: The Mayas believed that
  a. there was only one god.
  b. there were no gods.
  c. there were many gods.

  true/false: _____The Aztecs were a peaceful people.

  and a map section: Write the correct letter from the map next to the name of each Native American group. _____ Maya).

  as well as an essay question: Explain some differences between the Native American groups we've studied. What do we know about the way they lived?

B. The War with Mexico

Our textbook, of course, explains the historical setting, causes, and results of this conflict. However, it is very interesting to read accounts of the same events in the Mexican school textbooks I was able to acquire on my trip. A comparison of perspectives can not only enrich this unit, but also provide a better understanding of historical narratives in general. Realizing that there are two sides to every story may help students develop a critical sense which could give them a more objective look at what actually occurred.

OBJECTIVES: (from our textbook)

- •To identify problems that developed between Mexico and the Americans in Texas.
- •To describe the causes of the War with Mexico, the military action, and the results of the war.

STRATEGIES:

- •After reading about and discussing the Mexican War as described in our textbook, Spanish-speaking students will get extra credit for working together to translate into English the brief accounts of the same war given in elementary Mexican textbooks. Then those students will present the Mexican version to the class orally.
- •The entire class will discuss the differences between the two versions of that war and speculate about reasons for the differences.

MATERIALS:

- •Our textbook (See Appendix B for actual text.)
- •Social studies/history textbooks used in Mexican primarias (Bibliography items #11 and #14) (See Appendices C and D for actual text.)

QUESTIONS:

- •What are the differences between American and Mexican accounts of this conflict?
- •Which differences are omissions of certain facts, and which are directly opposing versions of the same event?
- •Why might some of these differences in perspective occur?
- •What role does national pride play in each version?
- •What embarrassing information might be left out of each version?
- •What other factors in the historical relationship between Mexico and the United States might have influenced each country's point of view on this war?

BACKGROUND NOTES:

- •A Mexican textbook says that the United States tried to buy Texas from Mexico and was refused; our textbook does not say that.
- •Our textbook says that American settlers were given land grants in Texas by Mexico; Mexican texts don't say that.
- •Both versions agree that Texans did not want to live by Mexican laws, especially the one forbidding slavery.

- •A Mexican textbook says that the U.S. government took advantage of Texas colonists' discontent and encouraged them to declare themselves independent; our textbook says it was the Texans' idea.
- •Our textbook calls Santa Ana an ambitious general who became a dictator; Mexican texts simply refer to him as the president of Mexico.
- •Both versions agree that the two countries disagreed about the southern border of Texas.
- •Both Mexican textbooks attribute the war to the U.S.'s longtime greed for Mexican lands; our textbook points first to millions of dollars of unpaid Mexican debt to the U.S., then mentions Manifest Destiny.
- •Our textbook says the war started when Mexican soldiers attacked American forces along the Rio Grande; a Mexican textbook says there were confrontations between Mexicans and Americans.

EVALUATION:

- •In our daily Oral Questions activity, students will respond to the above questions for a grade. In addition, they will respond to questions on the undisputed facts and outcomes of the war.
- •As a homework assignment, students will list chronologically the events leading up to the War with Mexico, identifying the ones which vary between the textbook accounts. For extra credit, they may write about their opinions on why the accounts differ.
- •As an extra credit project, students may further research this war, using other sources (it would be especially interesting to find sources from native countries of non-Mexican ESL students) and present their findings to the class.
- •On the Unit Test, students will respond to objective questions (for example, multiple choice: The United States went to war with Mexico in 1846 because
  a. Mexicans and Americans disagreed about the border of Texas
  b. Texas was a slaveholding region
  c. Sam Houston captured Santa Ana
  d. the Alamo fell to Santa Ana.

  matching: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
  - a. transferred Texas and other land from Mexico to the United States.

  and a timeline section: Match the letters on the timeline to these events.
  _____Santa Ana wins the Battle of the Alamo).

  as well as an essay question: Why did the people living in Texas in the early 1800s want Texas to become independent of Mexico?

C. Government Structure and Constitution

OBJECTIVES: (from our textbook)

- •To understand the importance of the Constitution to Americans today.
- •To identify the branches of government and their powers.
- •To state how separation of power and a system of checks and balances keeps any one branch from becoming too strong.

STRATEGIES:

- •After reading about and discussing the United States' Constitution and system of government, each student or group of students will prepare a report describing the constitution and governmental structure of their native countries, in terms of how decisions are made, how power is distributed, and how it is checked.
- •When reports are presented in class, students will discuss comparisons and contrasts with the U.S. system. Students are usually very motivated to discuss their countries, and drawing comparisons should encourage closer examination of the U.S. government structure we are studying.
- •I've found that most ESL students in high school are familiar with their native country's government practices, or they are easily researched, but my Mexican students rarely know much about the laws there. These materials and notes are designed to give them the information they need to participate in this activity.

MATERIALS:

- •Mexican Constitution (Bibliography item #9)
- •Mexican elementary social studies textbook (Bibliography item #11) (See Appendix E for actual text)
- •The following "Background Notes", made available for student research

QUESTIONS:

- •What are the similarities and differences between the U.S. government and your country's government?
- •Does your country have representational government? In what form?
- •Who appoints or elects government officials, cabinet members, judges, etc.?
- •Why might citizens prefer one type of appointment or election over another?
- •How much of a voice do citizens have in decision-making? How?
- •Are governmental powers divided into branches? How?
- •Who makes laws? What is the process? Can they be changed? How?
- •How can different parts of the government check each other?

BACKGROUND NOTES:

- •The Mexican Constitution, passed in 1917, was based on the United States Constitution. Their government is divided into the same three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. However, there is no functioning system of checks and balances. (Historically, the U.S. system was built by a confederation of states which had functioned independently for years and was distrustful of a central government. Checks and balances came out of this distrust. In Mexico, the Constitution created the states, which had no separate identities; they had been operating as a unit under an autocratic system for a long time and may have felt more comfortable under an all-powerful executive.)
- •The president must be 35 years old and serves one 6-year term, called a sexenio. He is more powerful than most presidents in the world; he is the leader of his political party, the head of the armed forces, he appoints his cabinet, nominates members of the Supreme Court, and controls the Congress and most state governors.

- There is no vice-president. If the president leaves office in the first two years of his sexenio, the Congress appoints an interim president until a new president can be elected to finish the term. If the president leaves office after four years into his sexenio, a congressional appointee finishes the term.
- Like our Congress, the Mexican legislature consists of two houses. The Cámara de Diputados has 500 members. The country is divided into 300 districts which each elect a diputado, and 200 more are selected by their political party, based on the percentage of the popular vote each party received (10% of the vote for PAN = 20 diputado seats). No party can have more than 315 members (66% of the seats), because that is the majority required to amend the Constitution. Diputados must be 21 years old and serve a single 3-year term.
- The Cámara de Senadores has four senators per state (x 31 states = 124). Three of them are elected by majority vote, and the fourth seat is given to the second-place party in each state. Senators must be 30 years old and serve a single 6-year term (every three years one-half of the senate is re-elected).
- The Supreme Court has eleven justices who serve a 15-year term. The president nominates three candidates for a seat, and the senate selects the justice from among them.
- There were 400 changes to the Mexican Constitution between 1917 and 1994, a much simpler process than in the U.S. A constitutional change can take three days: (1) the president initiates the change in the Cámara de Diputados, (2) if passed, it goes to the Senate, and (3) if passed, it goes to the state legislatures for a majority vote.
- Mexico has been more a central than a federal government: the president controls nearly all state matters and has the power to remove governors. The country seems to have used most the pieces of the U.S. Constitution which support the concentration of power in the presidency. Ninety percent of federal legislation is introduced by the president, not the members of congress.
- There is a trend now -- largely as a result of pressure from the U.S. and the international community -- toward change. Mexico is showing an effort to (1) decentralize its government, (2) strengthen its institutions, and (3) enforce its laws. President Zedillo campaigned to get rid of presidentialism and to promote the separation of powers. He states publicly that he wants to decrease presidential power and increase checks and balances. Recent reforms have given the judiciary the power to contest the constitutionality of laws and reinstitutionalize healthy conflict.

EVALUATION:

- Class presentations and subsequent discussions should reveal the degree to which students have interacted with U.S. structures, laws, and procedures, as well as their critical understanding.

•On the Unit Test, students will respond to objective questions (for example, multiple choice: Each state is represented by two people in the
a. Senate
b. House of Representatives
c. Supreme Court
d. Cabinet.
and a short-answer section: Why does Congress have 2 houses? What are they called, and how many members are in each house?),

as well as an essay question: Explain the advantages and disadvantages of having a very powerful president.

D. Political Parties and Elections

OBJECTIVES:
- •To identify the major political parties of the United States and the issues on which they most often disagree.
- •To describe the sequence of events in a presidential election, from the primaries through the inauguration.
- •To follow and understand the results of the 1996 U.S. presidential election.
- •To apply recently acquired knowledge about U.S. constitutional law and government structure to an examination of the electoral process in this country.
- •To apply new knowledge of U.S. electoral realities to an examination of the political/electoral situation experienced by our neighbor to the south, Mexico.

STRATEGIES:
- •After studying the birth of political parties in the U.S. (Hamilton and Jefferson), general platforms of the present-day Democratic and Republican parties, including vocabulary such as left/right, liberal/conservative, etc., and the election-year timeline of events, including vocabulary such as campaign, nominate, debate, etc., students will follow the 1996 election and discuss the results in class.
- •Then we will begin a brief study of the current state of Mexican politics, so that students may follow in a similar way (through the media) the upcoming elections there in 1997 and 2000, with some understanding of their significance to that society. Using a lecture/questioning/discussion format, I will present the information I gathered on my Fulbright trip, drawing parallels to our recent lessons on the U.S. political system.

MATERIALS:
- •The following "Background Notes"

QUESTIONS:
- •What are similarities and differences between U.S. and Mexican political systems?
- •What are the consequences of single-party domination in a government?

- •What are the consequences of political competition?
- •Why do people make voting decisions based on issues, candidates, or parties? What are the consequences of each type of decision-making?
- •What is corporatism?
- •Why would people risk their lives to belong to a controversial political organization?
- •How much power does the political party with a congressional majority have in the U.S.? And in Mexico?
- •What would it take for Mexicans to elect a PAN president in 2000?
- •Are electoral reforms a guarantee of fair and honest elections? Why or why not?

BACKGROUND NOTES:

- •Since it began in 1929, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) has controlled the government of Mexico, shaping a system that "looked like a democracy but worked like an authoritarian regime . . . Freedoms of speech and press were curtailed, and elections were controlled by a combination of machine politics, corruption, and fraud." (7) Besides the presidency, it presently holds over 300 congressional seats, 27 of the 31 state governors, and 28 of the state legislatures. The PRI, whose seal uses the colors of the Mexican flag, has been the most successful party in the world. The one-party state has created billionaires and cronyism.
- •As participation in the electoral process increases, opposition parties have finally started to gain support in some areas, taking advantage of people's mistrust of the PRI. However, many Mexicans have come to identify the historically governing party so closely with the national government that they feel failure to vote for the party of the state would be anti-Mexican. People in outlying urban areas fear they could lose basic services if they don't vote PRI (their connection with the government).
- •Opposition parties have also been up against corporatism: Mexicans joining unions or applying for government business licenses, for example, have automatically become part of PRI.
- •People have become more politically active and turned to opposition parties largely because they were discouraged by recent economic crises. When the government hasn't responded well to critical situations, other parties gain support out of dissatisfaction with PRI. The 1985 Mexico City earthquake, for example, brought people together against the governing party.
- •The strongest opposition party is the Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN). It is a party of big money, big cities, industrial centers, politically conservative and closely realted to the Catholic church. Four states are presently governed by PAN (Jalisco, Guanajuato, Baja California, and Chihuahua), as well as 220 municipalities, a total of 29.5 million people (around 30% of Mexico's population) governed by this party. All major cities have PAN mayors (except Mexico City, whose governor has been appointed for the last time; a new one will be elected in 1997). PAN will try to win control of the Cámara de Diputados in the 1997 election, and is planning a serious presidential bid in 2000.

- •The other major opposition party is the Partido de Revolución Democrática (PRD). It is strongest in rural areas and in the states of Michoacán, Tabasco, Oaxaca, Veracruz, Chiapas, and Guerrero. This is a leftist party which has won no governors or major city mayors. The PRD's ideology is probably the most attractive one to the Mexican people, but it seems to be losing voters. Mexicans are known to vote most often for parties or candidates rather than issues. (4) It is a party often divided by in-fighting. Furthermore, Mexico can be a dangerous place to support a revolutionary party: 320 PRD militants have been killed since 1988 for political reasons.
- •Electoral law in Mexico was designed to control electoral competition, allowing the least possible amount of opposition to PRI, and avoiding the alternation of power. Recent reforms, however, eliminate ruling party control of election procedures and ballot counting, and link Mexico's electoral machinery to the federal judiciary. For the first time, the Supreme Court will be able to intervene in electoral disputes. In another reform, citizens must now join political parties of their own free will. (3)
- •As the electoral process is being decentralized, and Mexican citizens grow dissatisfied with the governing party and freer to disagree with it, the PRI now needs the participation of other parties in Congress to pass constitutitonal amendments. With only 63% of Congress (since 1988), PRI can't achieve the 2/3 majority needed alone.

EVALUATION:

- •In our daily Oral Questions activity, students will respond to the above questions for a grade. In addition, they will respond to questions about the U.S. electoral process and identify candidates, issues, and outcomes of the 1996 election.
- •As a homework assignment, students will choose one of the above questions on which to prepare a written report.
- •Students can receive extra credit for bringing in current newspaper or magazine articles about the U.S. election or Mexican politics and discussing their significance in class.
- •Students can receive extra credit for researching and reporting on political/electoral systems in other countries.
- •On a quiz, students will respond to objective questions (for example,

short answer: Who won the 1996 U.S. presidential election?
Which political party do they belong to?

or matching: platform - a. what a candidate believes about the issues),

as well as an essay question: Describe how you see the differences between the Democratic and Republican party platforms in the U.S.

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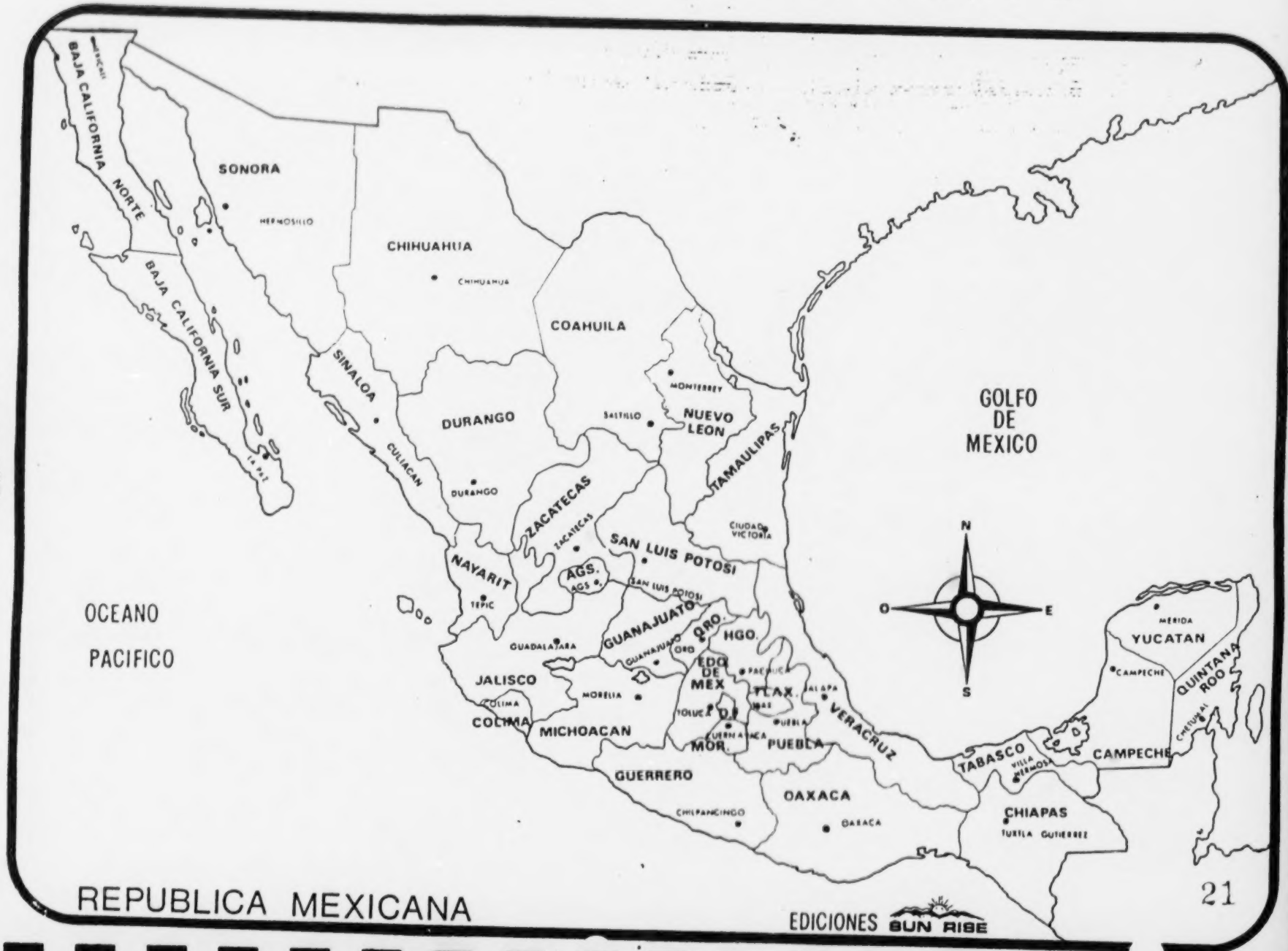
Appendix A



REPUBLICA MEXICANA

EDICIONES SUN RISE

Susan Rudoff

Appendix B: From *Exploring American History*, Globe Book Co., 1994.

CHAPTER 4

The War Between the United States and Mexico

OBJECTIVE: Why did the United States fight a war with Mexico, and what were the results of this war?

▲ General Winfield Scott led his soldiers through high mountain passes in order to reach Mexico City. After a fierce battle Scott and the American soldiers marched into Mexico City.

1. In 1847, General Winfield Scott had a difficult task before him. Fighting in the War with Mexico, Scott and his troops had just captured the Mexican city of Veracruz. Now he was marching his men toward the capital, Mexico City. To get there as quickly as possible, however, Scott had to cross over dangerous passes in the mountains. Scott decided to put a young officer from Virginia in charge of building bridges over the passes. After the bridges were built, American troops were able to reach Mexico City. Soon after, they captured it and brought the war to an end. General Scott gave much of the credit for the American victory to the young officer. General Scott also promoted the young man and described him as "the greatest military genius in America." Fourteen years later, in the Civil War, this officer commanded the Confederate army. The officer's name was Robert E. Lee.

Americans Settle in Texas What problems developed between Mexico and the Americans in Texas?

2. The first large group of Americans settled in Texas in the 1820s. In 1820, the Spanish government allowed Moses Austin, a Missouri banker, to start an American settlement there. Austin died soon after. However, his son, Stephen Austin, led a group of 300 American families to land along the Brazos River in 1821. The success of Austin's colony soon brought other Americans into Texas. These settlers were given land grants by Mexico, which had won its independence from Spain in 1821. By 1830, the

In Chapter 4, you will apply these critical thinking skills to the historical process

Drawing Conclusions: Making a statement that explains the facts and evidence

Comparing and Contrasting: Recognizing similarities and differences

Appendix B: From *Exploring American History*, Globe Book Co., 1994.

number of Americans in Texas was over 20,000.

3. The Mexican government became worried about the growing number of Americans in Texas. It was afraid that if more Americans settled in Texas, the United States would try to annex (uh-NEX) the territory. When a country annexes land, it adds or joins that territory to its existing land. In 1830, the Mexican government refused to allow more Americans into Texas. Despite this, many Americans continued to enter Texas.

4. Gradually, hard feelings developed between the Americans and the Mexican government. While most of the Americans were Protestants, a Mexican law said they had to go to Catholic church services. The Mexicans also expected the Americans to obey a Mexican law forbidding slavery. However, the American plantation owners in Texas refused to obey it. The Texans began to think seriously about becoming independent from Mexico. Then, in 1834, an ambitious general named Antonio López de Santa Anna became dictator (DIK-tay-tuhr) of Mexico. A dictator is a ruler who takes total power over the people. The Texans were now ready to fight for their independence.

▶ Why would the Texans want to be free of a dictator in Mexico?

Texans Win Independence How did Texas gain its independence from Mexico?

5. In 1835 the Texans formed their own army. The next year, a force of 187 Texans under William B. Travis was attacked at San Antonio. Travis faced a Mexican army of 6,000 men led by Santa Anna. The Texans retreated to an old Spanish mission called the Alamo. Greatly outnumbered, the men in the Alamo held off the Mexicans for two weeks. Finally, on March 6, 1836, the Alamo fell. Every man inside died in the fighting, including such famous Americans as Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie. Among the defenders of the Alamo were nine Mexican Americans. "Remember the Alamo" became the battle cry for Texans in their fight for freedom from Mexico.

▲ The men at the Alamo believed so strongly in independence for Texas that they were willing to die rather than surrender to Santa Anna.

Spotlight on Sources

6. This message, from William B. Travis, gives you an idea of how the Texans at the Alamo felt:

> Fellow Citizens and Compatriots:
>
> I am besieged [attacked] by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained [undergone] a continued bombardment for 24 hours and have not lost a man. The enemy have demanded a [our] surrender; otherwise the garrison [the Texans] is to be put to the sword [killed] if the place is taken. I have answered the [Mexican] summons [demand] with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat. . . . I am determined [know I must] to sustain [defend] myself as long as possible and die like a soldier

Appendix B: From *Exploring American History*, Globe Book Co., 1994.

> who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country. Victory or death.
>
> —from *History of Texas*, by Henderson Yoakum

▶ What words would you use to describe Colonel Travis and his men?

7. Santa Anna's victory at the Alamo, however, was one of his few successes in the war. In 1836, the main Texas army, led by Sam Houston, took the Mexicans by surprise at the Battle of San Jacinto (juh-SIN-toh). Santa Anna was captured and his army defeated by the Texans. He was forced to sign a treaty granting Texas its independence. Texas now became an independent republic. It elected Sam Houston its first president. The Vice-President was a Mexican named Lorenzo de Zavala.

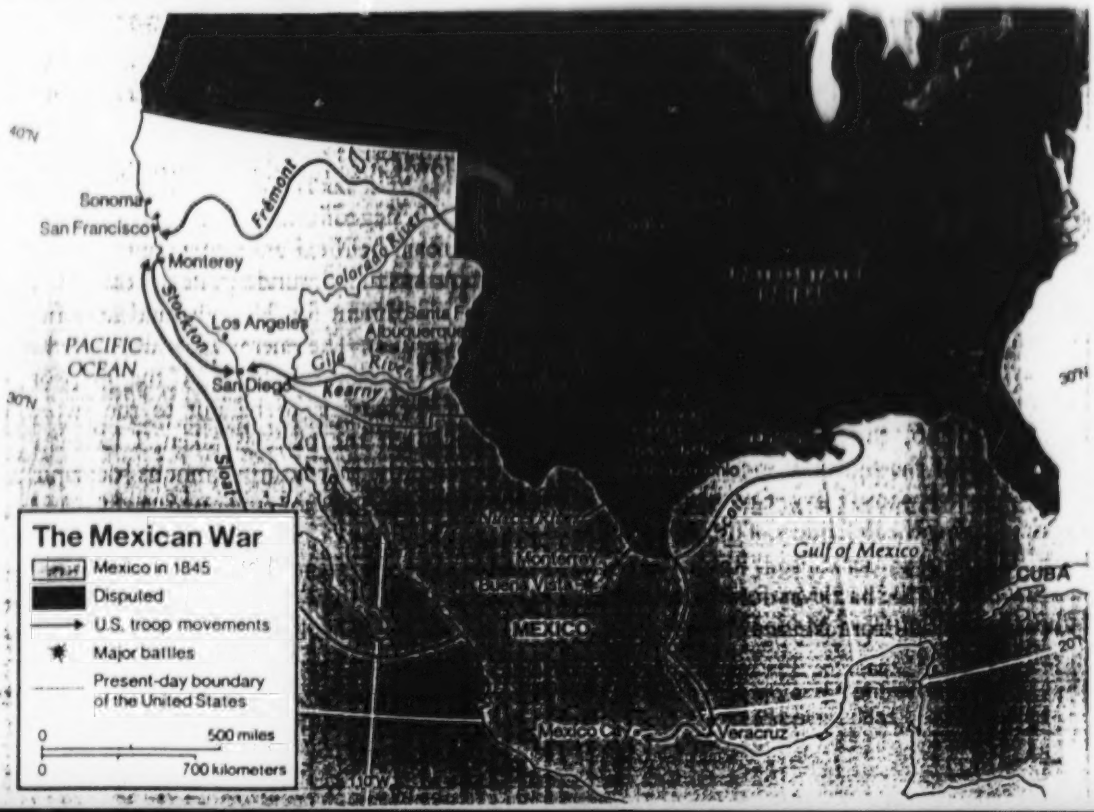
People in History

8. **Sam Houston** Before coming to Texas in the 1830s, Sam Houston had led a life full of adventure. At the age of 15, he ran away from home and lived with the Cherokee for three years. Later, he was a soldier, a lawyer, a member of Congress, and governor of Tennessee. When Texas became independent, Houston served twice as its president. Houston wanted Texas to become part of the United States, and he worked hard to achieve this goal. After Texas became a state, he served as a United States senator for 13 years. He was elected governor of Texas in 1859. The city of Houston was named in his honor.

Texas Joins the Union Why did admitting Texas to the Union lead to war with Mexico?

9. Texans had strong reasons for wanting to join the United States. The republic of Texas had little money to run its government. Its army was too small and weak to protect it from raids by Mexicans, Comanches, and Apaches. Besides, most Texans had been Americans before they settled in Texas, and they wanted to remain

MAP SKILL BUILDER: Often rivers become natural boundaries between states or nations. **1.** What did the Rio Grande separate in 1845? **2.** What does the Rio Grande separate today?



Appendix B: From *Exploring American History*, Globe Book Co., 1994.

Americans. In the United States, though, people did not agree on whether Texas should be admitted as a state. Many Northerners were against it because Texas was a slaveholding region. Others feared that Mexico would declare war on the United States if it accepted Texas as a state. Finally, in December 1845, after nearly ten years of independence, Texas became the twenty-eighth state of the United States. Did Northerners or Southerners gain the most when Texas was admitted as a state?

10. As expected, Mexico was upset with the United States over the annexation of Texas. To begin with, Mexico had never accepted the idea of an independent Texas. Also, Mexico disagreed with Texas about its southern border. Texas claimed its southern boundary was the river called the Rio Grande. The Mexican government insisted the boundary was farther north at the Nueces River.

11. For its part, the United States had reasons to be on bad terms with Mexico. Mexico owed American citizens several million dollars in unpaid debts. Many Americans also believed in the idea of **Manifest Destiny** (MAN-i-fest DES-ti-nee), or the right of the United States to rule all of North America. This would include Mexico and its lands. The stage was set for war. In April 1846, Mexican soldiers attacked American forces along the Rio Grande in territory claimed by both Texas and Mexico. The United States used this attack as a reason to declare war.

The War with Mexico What military action took place in the war?

12. From the American point of view, the War with Mexico was unusual in two ways. One was that American armies had to cover great distances. The other was that the American forces fighting the war were quite small. In the Southwest, General Stephen Kearny led an army of only about 1,700 men from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, nearly 800 miles (1,290 km) to Santa Fe. Kearny captured Santa Fe with hardly a shot being fired, giving him control of New Mexico. He then marched part of his small army another 900 miles (about 1,450 km) farther west to southern California. There he defeated a Mexican army near San Diego and Los Angeles. The territory of California was now in American hands.

13. Meanwhile, General Zachary Taylor was invading Mexico. He marched 300 miles (about 490 km) into northern Mexico, defeating the Mexicans at Monterrey and Buena Vista. When Mexico refused to make peace, in March 1847 General Winfield Scott landed his army at the port of Veracruz and captured the city. Less than six months later, Scott captured Mexico City and ended the war.

Results of the Mexican War What new lands did the United States gain?

14. In February 1848, the Americans and Mexicans signed the Treaty of Guadelupe Hidalgo (gwah-day-LOO-pay ee-DAHL-goh) that ended the War with Mexico. In this treaty the United States gained over 535,000 square miles (1,385,650 sq. km) of new territory, for which it paid Mexico $15 million. This territory was known as the **Mexican Cession.** The United States promised to give the Mexicans in the Mexican Cession full citizenship rights and to respect their property. Five years later, the United States bought the **Gadsden Purchase** for $10 million. Find the Gadsden Purchase and the Mexican Cession on the map on page xxi.

Outlook

15. With the annexation of Texas, the land won in the Mexican Cession, and the Gadsden Purchase, the United States gained most of its present-day boundaries. The new territories of the Southwest would bring rich natural resources and provide new homes for thousands of Americans moving west. Yet the slavery issue in these territories would weaken the growing nation. It would help cause a terrible war, not with foreign enemy, but within the nation itself. This bloody conflict, called the Civil War, pitted Americans against one another.

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Appendix C: From *México, Mi Patria*, Fernández Editores, 1992.

La invasión norteamericana

Los Estados Unidos de América no conformes con haber anexado Texas a su territorio, querían apoderarse de Nuevo México y California. Así, en el año de 1847 los norteamericanos invadieron nuestro país, el ejército mexicano se les enfrentó en Matamoros y Monterrey pero fue derrotado.

Santa Anna fue nombrado nuevamente presidente y al frente de su ejército combatió a los norteamericanos en la batalla de la Angostura, en el estado de Coahuila, pero en lugar de seguir al enemigo lo dejó reponerse y después abandonó la lucha.

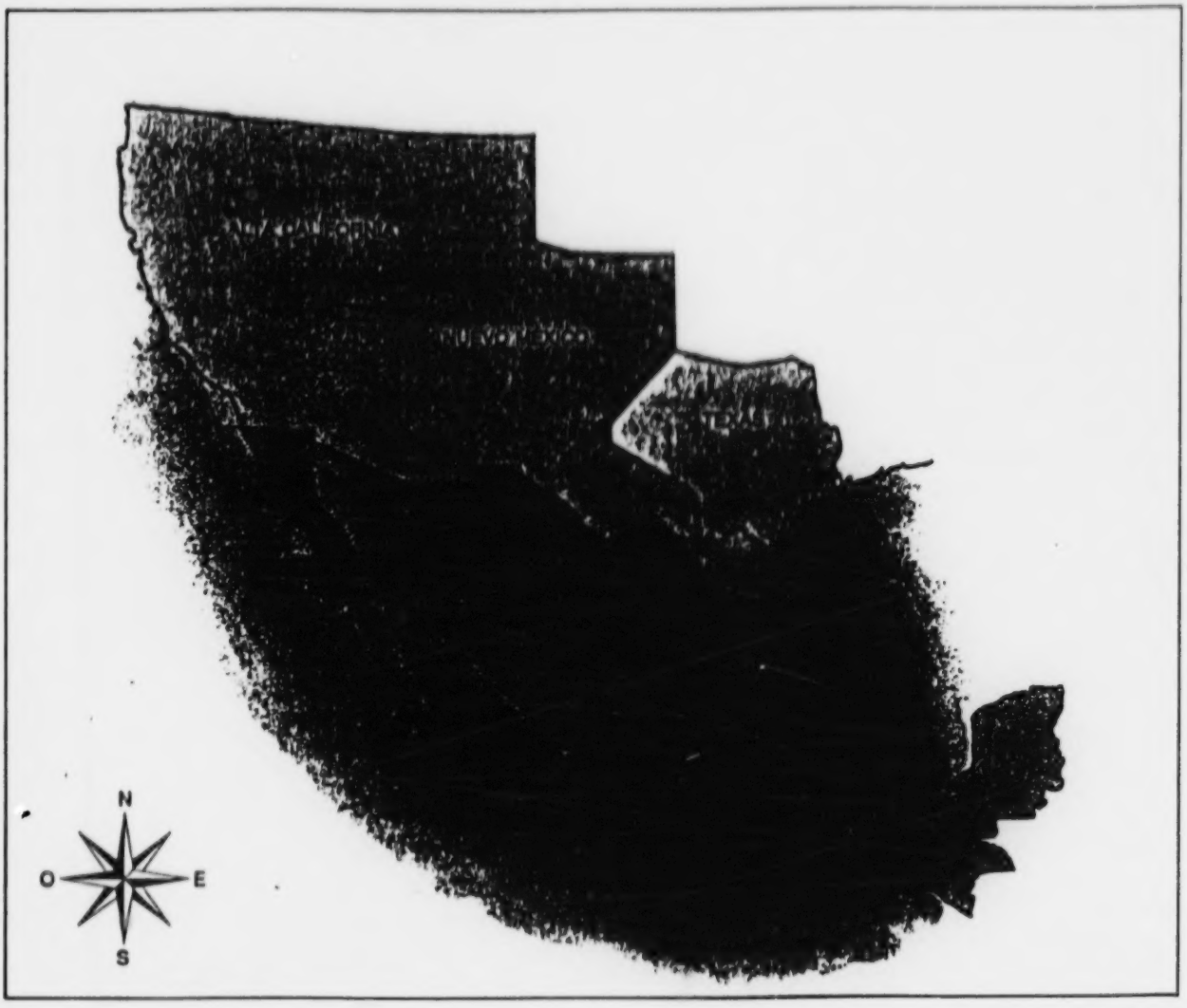
El ejército invasor desembarcó en Veracruz y, pasando por Puebla, llegó a la ciudad de México. En el convento de Churubusco les hizo frente el general Pedro María Anaya, quien fue derrotado. El 13 de septiembre de 1847, los cadetes del Colegio Militar, jóvenes de 13 a 18 años, hicieron una defensa heroica del Castillo de Chapultepec, lugar donde todos perdieron la vida.

Debido a la corta edad que tenían estos valientes y patriotas cadetes, cuando defendieron heroicamente nuestro país, los mexicanos los recordamos como los "Niños Héroes". Los principales protagonistas de tal gesta fueron: Juan Escutia, Juan de la Barrera, Francisco Márquez, Fernando Montes de Oca, Agustín Melgar y Vicente Suárez.

GRAL. PEDRO MARÍA ANAYA

Appendix C: From *México, Mi Patria*, Fernández Editores, 1992.

Independencia de Texas



Con el deseo de crear nuevos estados en los que dominara la esclavitud y apoyaran la necesidad de su existencia en el congreso americano, los Estados Unidos pretendieron negociar la compra de Texas, territorio que en esa época pertenecía a nuestro país.

La venta de este territorio le fue negada por el gobierno mexicano. Debido a ello, Estados Unidos intentó adueñarse de Texas en otra forma: pretextando que los norteamericanos necesitaban tierras para el cultivo del algodón, pidió permiso al gobierno de México para establecer una colonia en la región texana.

Los colonos con habla, costumbres y tradiciones diferentes a las del resto de la población, no se ajustaban a las leyes y no aceptaban el centralismo de la Constitución Mexicana que les fue impuesta. Los Estados Unidos de América aprovechándose del descontento de los colonos, fomentó entre ellos la idea de independizar Texas.

Cuando el entonces presidente de México, Antonio López de Santa Anna, tuvo noticias de la separación de los texanos, decidió ir a someterlos, pero fue hecho prisionero por el general norteamericano Samuel Houston. Santa Anna para salvar su vida firmó los Tratados de Velasco en mayo de 1836, mediante los cuales se comprometía a retirar sus tropas y reconocía la independencia de Texas.

Appendix D: From *Historia: Cuarto Grado*, Comisión Nacional de los Libros de Text Gratuitos, 1995.

La primera reforma liberal

En las nuevas elecciones resultó presidente Santa Anna, pero de inmediato dejó en su lugar al vicepresidente, Valentín Gómez Farías. Gómez Farías y el escritor José María Luis Mora estaban convencidos de que era importante que el país se ahorrara los gastos que significaba mantener al clero y al ejército. Éstos deseaban conservar sus privilegios, o *fueros*, como tener tribunales especiales, y junto con los grandes propietarios y comerciantes formaron el partido de los conservadores, que encabezaba Lucas Alamán.

En 1833, Gómez Farías dictó importantes leyes en materia educativa y contra los privilegios del clero y del ejército; esto ocasionó una serie de revueltas de los conservadores. En parte el desorden se debió a la falta de disciplina de algunos jefes militares, que se levantaban en armas con cualquier pretexto. Los gobiernos de aquel difícil periodo fueron siempre débiles.

Algunos grupos de conservadores pensaron entonces que hacía falta un gobierno más fuerte. Para organizarlo, en 1837 promulgaron una nueva constitución, las Siete Leyes, que establecía el gobierno republicano central. Los estados pasaron a ser departamentos, con un gobernador nombrado por el gobierno central.

Sam Houston, adoptado de un jefe cherokee, encabezó los ejércitos separatistas de los texanos. Grabado de la época.

La separación de Texas y la Guerra de los Pasteles

Desde tiempos del Virreinato, algunos norteamericanos obtuvieron permiso para instalarse en Texas, que era parte de la Nueva España. Después de la independencia, continuaron llegando colonos estadunidenses y, con el tiempo, llegaron a ser más que los mexicanos. Tenían sus propias costumbres, hablaban inglés y no querían vivir sujetos a las leyes mexicanas. En 1835 se declararon independientes.

Santa Anna fue a someterlos. Su ejército llegó debilitado, tras el largo camino por los desiertos del norte, pero ganó las primeras batallas. Sin embargo, mientras Santa Anna acampaba a orillas del río San Jacinto fue sorprendido y capturado. Para recobrar la libertad, hizo un pacto con los texanos: ordenó que se retirara el ejército y reconoció la independencia de Texas.

Otro problema surgió: Francia exigió que se pagaran los daños sufridos por algunos franceses durante las revueltas. Las reclamaciones eran tan exageradas, que un pastelero quería cobrar los pasteles perdidos en un motín. Por eso llamamos a este conflicto la *Guerra de los Pasteles*. En 1838, los franceses cañonearon Veracruz. México reconoció la deuda, pero no había dinero para pagar ni para organizar la defensa, así que solicitó nuevos préstamos y pagó a Francia.

Appendix D: From *Historia: Cuarto Grado*. Comisión Nacional de los Libros de Text Gratuitos. 1995.

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La guerra con los Estados Unidos

La situación iba de mal en peor. Las deudas, la insalubridad, los bandoleros y los enfrentamientos entre los propios mexicanos aumentaban.

En 1845, los texanos decidieron unirse a los Estados Unidos. El límite de Texas era el río Nueces, pero los texanos dijeron que su frontera llegaba más al sur, hasta el río Bravo. México protestó, pero los estadunidenses ocuparon el territorio entre los dos ríos. Hubo enfrentamientos entre mexicanos y norteamericanos, y con ese pretexto los Estados Unidos declararon la guerra a México, cuyos territorios ambicionaban hacía mucho tiempo.

California y Nuevo México fueron invadidos de inmediato. Lo mismo ocurrió con las ciudades de Matamoros y Monterrey. Tropas enemigas desembarcaron en el puerto de Veracruz, atravesaron ese estado y el de Puebla, y pusieron sitio a la capital. Los mexicanos no tenían suficientes armas ni dinero. Además, liberales y conservadores seguían luchando entre ellos, mientras los norteamericanos avanzaban hacia la Ciudad de México.

No hubo victorias en esta guerra. Pero sí heroísmo y sacrificio. Las batallas de Molino del Rey y de Chapultepec se libraron del 8 al 13 de septiembre de 1847. El día 14 la Ciudad de México fue tomada y la bandera enemiga ondeó en el Palacio Nacional.

La ocupación duró nueve meses. Las consecuencias fueron desastrosas. México tuvo que firmar el Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo, por el cual perdió Nuevo México, la Alta California, Texas y la parte de Tamaulipas que estaba entre los ríos Nueces y Bravo. Recibió quince millones de pesos. Su territorio se redujo a poco menos de la mitad, pero la guerra hizo que los mexicanos sintieran como nunca antes la necesidad de estar unidos.

General Pedro María Anaya. Óleo de A. Núñez. Siglo XIX.

En la batalla de Churubusco, en agosto de 1847, el general Pedro María Anaya tuvo que rendirse. Cuenta la tradición que cuando se le preguntó dónde guardaba las municiones, su respuesta fue: "Si tuviéramos parque, ustedes no estarían aquí".
***Batalla de Churubusco*, por Carlos Nebel.**

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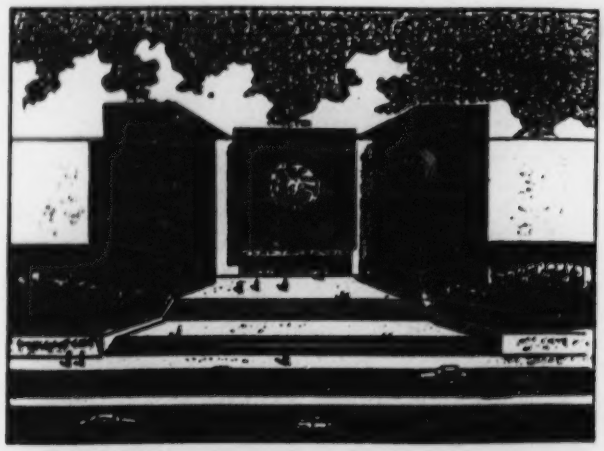
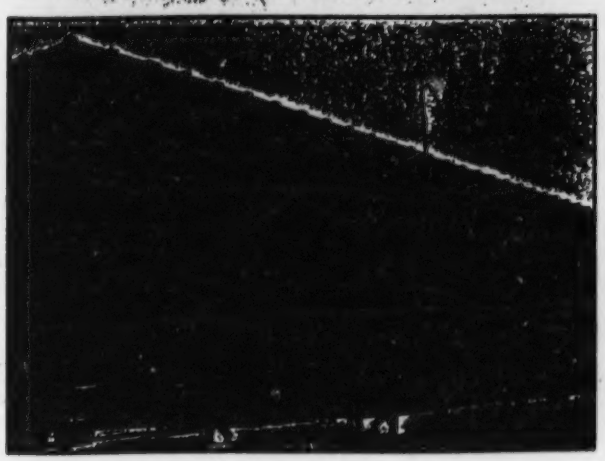
Appendix E: From *México, Mi Patria*, Fernández Editores, 1992.

Los tres poderes



Legislativo

Gobierno federal — Ejecutivo



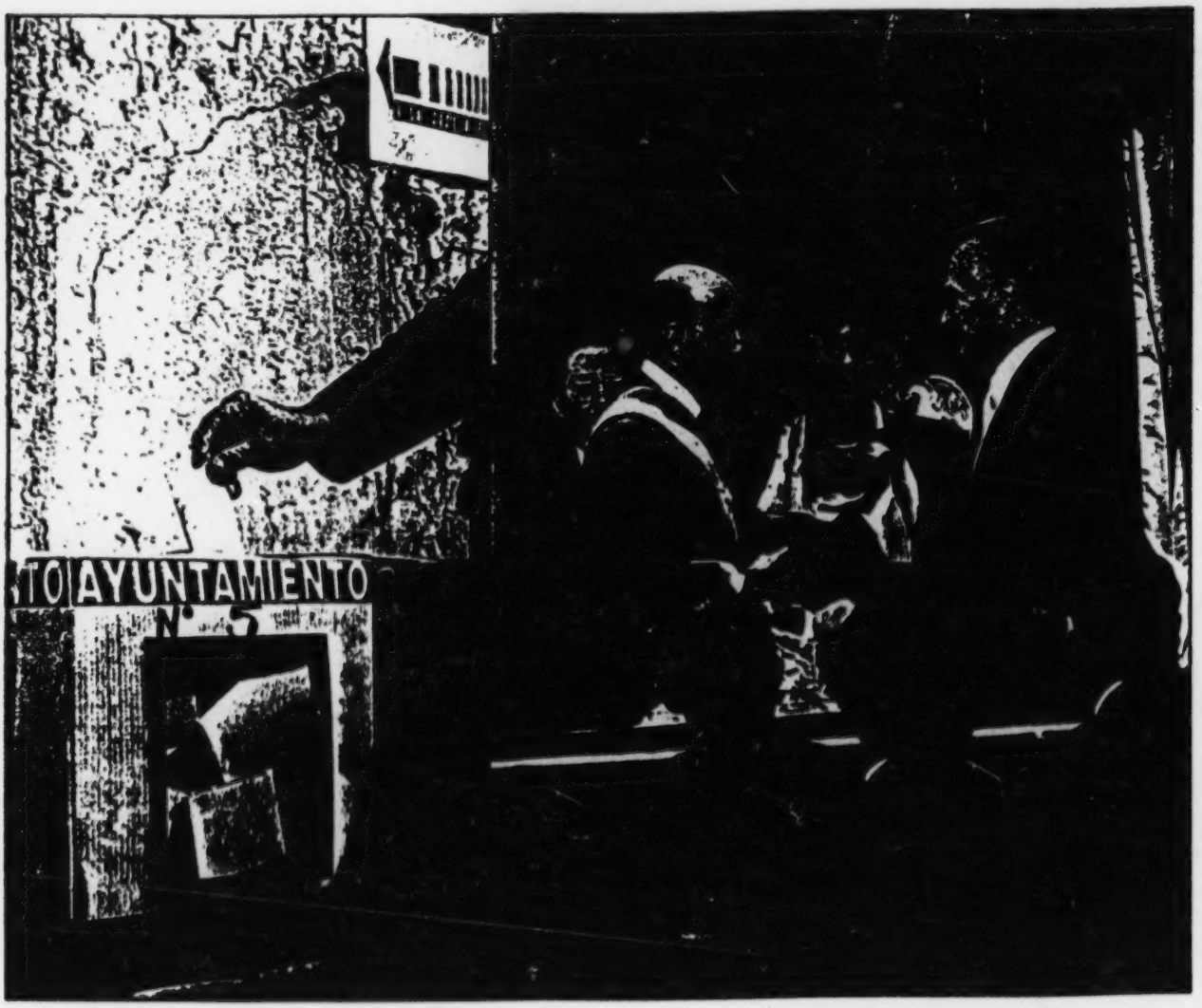
Judicial

El poder Legislativo está constituido por el Congreso de la Unión, el cual se divide en Cámara de Diputados y Cámara de Senadores.

El presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos es el representante del poder Ejecutivo. El presidente de la República se auxilia de los secretarios de Estado y del jefe del Departamento del Distrito Federal, para el óptimo desempeño de las funciones ejecutivas, que están bajo su responsabilidad.

Appendix E: From *México, Mi Patria*, Fernández Editores, 1992.

El gobierno



La institución que se encarga de hacer cumplir las leyes, de mantener la unidad y la convivencia de sus habitantes y del progreso en todos los ámbitos de la sociedad que representa, se llama gobierno.

De acuerdo a la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, nuestro gobierno tiene tres características principales y son las siguientes:

Democrático	Porque los ciudadanos pueden votar para elegir a sus gobernantes o bien pueden ser elegidos.
Representativo	Puesto que el gobierno debe estar constituido por las personas que los ciudadanos eligen para que los representen.
Federal	Ya que está formado por la unión de estados libres y soberanos que reconocen a un gobierno nacional.

El gobierno federal de nuestro país está dividido en tres poderes:

Ejecutivo, Legislativo y Judicial; todos residen en el Distrito Federal.